30

What is claimed is:

1.   A contents processing apparatus comprising:
a contents information storage that stores contents,
5   a contents management file for managing licenses for the contents, and plug-in modules for executing processing of the contents;
a plug-in setting device that sets plug-in modules corresponding to contents to be processed;
10   an operation recognition device that recognizes unlimited operations relating to execution of processing of the contents to be processed from the contents management file corresponding to the contents to be processed;
15   a plug-in function permission device that permits use of functions corresponding to the unlimited operations recognized by said operation recognition device among functions of the plug-in modules set by said plug-in setting device; and
20   a contents processing execution device that executes processing of the contents to be processed, according to the functions of the plug-in modules permitted by said plug-in function permission device.

2.   A contents processing apparatus according to
25   claim 1, wherein:
said contents information storage further stores a plug-in management file for defining executable operative functions of the plug-in modules;
said plug-in function permission device permits use
30   of the plug-in modules set by said plug-in setting device according to contents of the plug-in management file; and
the contents processing apparatus further comprises an update device that updates the plug-in management file.

3.   A contents processing apparatus according to
35   claim 1, wherein the contents processing apparatus is

31

connected to an external apparatus via a communication network, and the contents management file is obtained from the external apparatus via the communication network.

4. A contents processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the contents management file is rewritable and capable of being obtained independently of contents corresponding thereto.

5. A contents processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the plug-in management file is rewritable and capable of being obtained independently of contents corresponding thereto.

6. A contents processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the contents are inhibited from being used when there is no contents management file corresponding to the contents, and are also inhibited from being processed when there is no plug-in management file corresponding to the contents.

7. A contents processing program executed by a contents processing apparatus including a contents information storage that stores contents, a contents management file for managing licenses for the contents, and plug-in modules for executing processing of the contents, comprising:

a plug-in setting module for setting plug-in modules corresponding to contents to be processed;

an operation recognition module for recognizing unlimited operations regarding execution of processing of the contents to be processed from the contents management file corresponding to the contents to be processed;

a plug-in function permission module for permitting use of functions corresponding to the unlimited operations recognized by said operation recognition module among functions of the plug-in modules set by said plug-in setting module; and

a contents processing execution module for executing

32

processing of the contents to be processed, according to
the functions of the plug-in modules permitted by said
plug-in function permission module.